

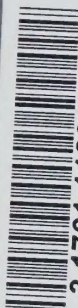
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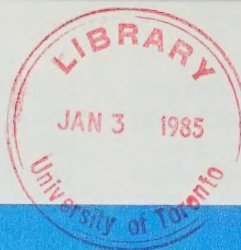
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Ontario's BEST



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Four Years of Energy Action

Helping Employees Save Energy



In 1980 the Ontario government's energy bill was a steep \$60 million. The time was ripe for our 80,000 public servants to make energy saving a daily habit, both on and off the job. In November 1980 the Cabinet approved a program to be known as Ontario's Big Energy Saving Team (BEST). The objectives of the BEST program were to:

1. Increase awareness among Ontario government employees of the need to conserve energy and suggest ways that employees can save energy on the job.
2. Encourage employees to reduce energy consumption in government-owned and leased buildings and work equipment.
3. Help employees to reduce the fuel consumed by government vehicles or by their own vehicles when used for business purposes.
4. Encourage employees to reduce their energy consumption in their homes and vehicles.

5. Inform employees about all internal government energy conservation programs and generate participation in them.

6. Keep the public informed about the Ontario's BEST program through media contact.

Organizational Structure

Endorsement by top-level management helped create credibility and enthusiasm at the start of the program. Twenty-eight BEST Coordinators were appointed by the Deputy Ministers of Ontario's 23 ministries and by Management Board of Cabinet, the Civil Service Commission, the Secretariat for Resources Development and the Secretariat for Social Development.

The Ministry of Energy was designated as the lead

Ministry, to set up the program, provide information and guidance to participants and organize government-wide energy conservation projects.

Employees with a broad knowledge of their ministry's policies and programs and with access to senior management were selected as BEST coordinators. They were responsible for developing, coordinating and monitoring BEST activities within their ministry and for spearheading their ministry's participation in activities.

Coordinators recruited more than 1,000 local BEST representatives to ensure that program activities reached government employees throughout the province. Representatives are primarily responsible for distributing energy conservation information and publicizing BEST events. They also organize local activities.

Program Development

To help determine the kinds of activities BEST should concentrate on, in 1981 the Ministry of Energy surveyed in-house energy conservation programs existing in the government.

GEMP (Government Energy Management Program), active since 1976, focuses on retrofits and innovations in building energy management and mechanical operations.

TEMP (Transportation Energy Management Program) was introduced in 1977 to help reduce Ontario's dependence on crude oil by encouraging the efficient use of energy by all vehicles in Ontario.

The program promotes ridesharing to private and public sector employees; promotes teleconferencing as a low-cost, efficient way to hold meetings without the expense and time required by travel; promotes fuel-efficient driving habits, vehicle selection and maintenance and efficient fleet operations for private sector and government.

Project Paper Recycle, a government-wide effort to reduce the startling number of trees cut down each year for paper, was born in 1979. Coordinated by the Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Project Paper Recycle gets office workers involved by sorting their recyclable waste paper into special bins.

These three programs were and continue to be successful at reducing the government's energy bill. It was deter-

mined that BEST would intensify their results by getting **more** employees involved in a broad range of energy awareness activities, and by encouraging employees to **set an example** for others through personal energy conservation.

BEST did not set an energy savings target, because savings due only to the BEST program could not be separated from savings due to the other conservation programs.

Launching Best

A public relations firm was hired in the winter of 1981 to create a unifying program logo. The name Ontario's BEST (Big Energy Saving Team) was selected because it implies a sense of pride in belonging to Ontario's civil service, and conveys the notion of a large group pulling together to produce significant energy savings.

A teaser campaign began in May 1982, one month before the official launch. The question, "Are you one of Ontario's BEST?", and the promise "The BEST is yet to come" appeared mysteriously in **topical**, the government employees' weekly newsletter, as well as on posters and in pay envelopes.

The official opening celebration, Energy Day, was held in Queen's Park June 2, 1982. Premier William Davis and then Minister of Energy, Robert Welch hosted the party. Similar Energy Days were held in Thunder Bay, Sudbury and Smiths Falls during the launch period, June through October 1982. In total 2500 employees attended Energy Days. Through exhibits, demonstrations and competitions, they learned how to save energy at work and in their personal activities.

In all, 9,500 employees — about 12 per cent of all Ontario government employees — signed up to join the BEST Team during the five-month start-up period. They received BEST membership kits containing iron-on tee shirt decals, a button, a membership card and an Energy Bingo Card.

Within the first several months, it became clear that employees were very interested in hearing about energy saving at home as well as at work. Home energy conservation offers people the direct personal benefits of savings and comfort, while clear cut gains from personal effort are



harder to see in an office. BEST organizers decided to capitalize on the high level of interest in home energy ideas while continuing to encourage energy saving on the job. It was thought that good home energy saving habits would also spill over into the workplace.

Educational Tools

All coordinators and representatives had access to speakers, films, displays, pamphlets, posters and decals. Speakers presented popular household and automobile energy topics such as How to Insulate Your Basement, Correctly Sealing Your Home and How to be a Gas Miser.

Local BEST representatives were encouraged to borrow Ministry of Energy films for lunch hour screenings. A popular choice was "Old House/New House", an award-winning film about Ecology House, a retrofitted Victorian home.

Three new displays were produced by the Ministry of Energy. "Tune Up Your House" describes low and medium-cost ways of making a home more energy efficient. Another profiles top energy saving buildings in the Government Energy Management Program. A third exhibits the top entries in an energy poster contest. Representatives were encouraged to organize energy events using the displays or set them up in the lobby where they work.

"Ontario's BEST Ways to Save Energy Where You Work" a pamphlet containing nine energy-saving tips, was produced and distributed. Decals were posted in key office locations to promote good habits such as taking stairways rather than elevators when going only one or two floors, photocopying on both sides of a sheet, turning off unneeded lights and appliances and shutting off dripping taps.

Government-Wide Exposure

BEST initiated high-profile government-wide energy activities to generate and maintain enthusiasm for the program and to make government employees from all parts of the province feel a part of the BEST team. From

the Energy Days that launched the program, to the speaker sessions that ran throughout, person-to-person contact was a main feature. People could get useful advice and information materials about their own specific energy questions.

Vehicle Emission Testing attracted more than 1,200 vehicle owners and government fleet drivers over the summers of 1982 and 1983.

An introductory seminar explains how a well-tuned car and good driving habits can save energy dollars. A clinic allowed employees to have their car's (or government fleet vehicle's) exhaust emissions analysed and tire pressure checked, free, by a qualified mechanic.

About half of the vehicles tested failed the emission test, but five out of six 'failures' later adjusted their cars to be more fuel efficient. The number of participants who routinely checked their tires each month rose from forty per cent before the test to seventy per cent after.

The **Fleet Drivers Energy Awareness Pilot Project** involved sessions to train 120 government fleet drivers in fuel-efficient driving and maintenance practices and a contest in which the drivers competed to save fuel for their ministry. The top group of drivers was from the Ministry of Labour's Construction Health and Safety Branch. The seven drivers in this group reduced their fuel consumption by 35 per cent over the three month competition. This activity is now part of TEMP.

Saving Energy In Government Buildings, an annual awards event was organized to honour outstanding energy savings made by building operators. The awards program has been incorporated into GEMP.

Energy Beat, a bimonthly column in *topical*, attracted 485 inquiries over a year and a half, ranging from heat pumps to thermal blankets for swimming pools.

The **Energy Bingo Game** replaced conventional Bingo numbers with energy conservation tips such as "caulk around door frames". For nine weeks players matched their cards to tips printed in *topical*. After an energy-related skill-testing question, winners received a prize.

In an October 1982 **Energy Poster Contest**, all employees and their families were challenged to create posters on an energy theme. Two winning designs were printed and distributed to all government offices.



In Pursuit of the Joules — an energy quiz — ran in *topical* between July and September, 1983. A follow-up article answered the questions that readers found difficult.

A **Limerick Contest** attracted 350 entries from 200 people in March and April 1984. The five winning entries were published and winning poets received solar calculators. One of the winning entries was:

There was a young man named Ross,
One commuter per car made him cross,
But this man's no fool,
He began a car pool,
And now gives a ride to his boss.

Jim Burton
Ministry of Correctional Services
Scarborough

The Results

In the early 80s, unemployment and inflation overtook energy as priority concerns. Perhaps BEST's most important achievement, therefore, was to help maintain the profile of the energy issue for government employees during this period.

As indicated by pre and post-program surveys, BEST reached almost two-thirds of Ontario government employees during its first year of operation. Thirty-two per cent of all employees were actively involved in at least one activity. And another twenty nine per cent read at least one piece of program information.

The energy conservation attitudes and behaviours of active participants showed an improvement in four major areas during the first year: energy conserving; home and driving behaviours; conservation attitudes on the job and awareness of other internal conservation programs. Surveys indicate that BEST had its greatest impact on the home energy conservation behaviour of all employees.

This is attributed to the direct personal benefits that employees (as homeowners) gain by taking retrofit measures.

Ontario's BEST has now been concluded, but the Ontario government will continue to conduct energy awareness activities for its employees.

A Final Note

A byproduct of the BEST program is the transferrable expertise gained in two areas: employee motivation and large-scale interministerial coordination. The lessons learned in generating a relatively high degree of voluntary employee involvement are applicable to employee motivation programs on energy-related and other topics in and outside government. These are an important plus from the BEST experience to date.

For additional information about specific activities mentioned in this brochure and about employee motivation programs in general, please contact:

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